

Message Text

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ACTION IO-13

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FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7499

INFO USUN NEW YORK 533

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UNCLAS PANAMA 2838

PARIS FOR UNESCO, ROME FOR FODAG, VIENNA FOR IAEA AND
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TAGS: EAID, ECRP, UNDP, PN

SUBJECT: CERP 0008-UNDP: EVALUATION OF UN ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

REF: (A) A-62 APRIL 9, 1975; (B) STATE 72386

BEGIN SUMMARY: MESSAGE UPDATES KEY CHANGES SINCE REF (A)
IN UN SYSTEM ASSISTANCE. RESPONSE IS KEYED TO PARA 4 REF
(B). END SUMMARY.

(A) ROLE OF UNDP

INCUMBENT UNDP RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE (RES REP), WHO
ARRIVED PANAMA IN SEPTEMBER 1975, HAS ESTABLISHED EFFECTIVE
WORKING RELATIONSHIPS WITH GOP OFFICIALS. WITH EXCEPTION
OF UNICEP (BACKSTOPPED FROM GUATEMALA), WHICH DOES NOT
PARTICIPATE IN COUNTRY PROGRAMMING EXERCISE, RES REP IS
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EFFECTIVELY COORDINATING ALL UN SYSTEM TECHNICAL

ASSISTANCE ACTIVITIES.

IBRD LOAN PREPARATION MISSINS ARE PROVIDED OFFICE SPACE AND LOGISTIC SUPPORT BY UNDP OFFICE, AND RES REP IS FOSTERING CLOSER UNDP/IBRD WORKING RELATIONSHIPS. THOUGHT UNDP NOT SYSTEMATICALLY INVOLVED IN DEVELOPING IBRD LOAN ACTIVITIES, IBRD HAS ACTED AS AN EXECUTING AGENCY ON GRANT ACTIVITIES IN FULL COORDINATION WITH UNDP. RES REP STAFFING ADEQUATE FOR COORDINATION IN LIGHT LEVEL OF COUNTRY PROGRAM AND THAT PROPOSED FOR 1977-81 AND DOES NOT WARRANT ADDING SPECIALIZED AGENCY REPRESENTATIVES TO STAFF. RES REP IN 1975 WAS ASKED TO CONSIDER ADDING A FAO REPRESENTATIVE TO HIS STAFF; THIS WAS REJECTED FOR REASON NOTED ABOVE.

(B) COORDINATION

DONOR COORDINATION GROUP (DCG) WITH REPRESENTATION INCLUDING AID, IDB, PAHO/WHO, OAS AND UNDP IS INFORMAL COORDINATING MECHANISM WHICH MEETS EVERY 6-8 WEEKS TO DISCUSS GENERAL PLANS AND EXCHANGE IDEAS ON PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION. (GOP

AWARE OF AND HAS NOT EXPRESSED SENSITIVITY TO SUCH COORDINATION.) DCG DISCUSSIONS HAVE LEAD TO FORMATION OF AD-HOC WORKING GROUPS TO ADDRESS SPECIFIC OPERATIONAL MATTERS. RES REP AND STAFF PLAY AN ACTIVE AND CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE IN THE PROCESS AND IN ROUTING DAILY WORKING LEVEL CONTACTS. (UNDP ALSO PUBLISHES AN ANNUAL COMPENDIUM ON DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE INPUTS OF ALL DONORS.)

(C) FINANCIAL RESTRAINTS

DUE TO BUDGETARY CONSTRAINTS UNDP RECENTLY NEGOTIATED WITH GOP REDUCED SUPPORT, THE DROPPING OF MARGINALLY EFFECTIVE ACTIVITIES AND DEFERRAL OF ACTIVITIES PREVIOUSLY PROGRAMMED FOR 1976. IN OVERALL TERMS THE RETRENCHMENT MEANS A 33PERCENT REDUCTION IN PLANNED 1976 PROGRAM EXPENDITURE LEVEL (FROM \$1.5 MILLION TO \$1.0 MILLION). UNDP PROGRAM DRAWINGS AGAINST 1972-1976 IPF (\$7.5 MILLION) WERE EXHAUSTED IN LATE 1975; 1976 PROGRAM BEING FINANCED AS AN ADVANCE ON PROPOSED 1977-1981 IPF. WITH PROSPECT FOR CONTINUING BUDGET STRINGENCY, NO NEW PROGRAMS LIKELY TO BE UNDERTAKEN BEFORE LATE 1977. TO DATE, UN HAS BEEN ABLE TO ACCOMMODATE REDUCTIONS WITH NO REDUCTION OF ON-BOARD PERSONNEL.

(D) COUNTRY PROGRAMMING

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PROPOSED PROGRAM SHOWS GREATER COHESIVENESS AND SECTORAL CONCENTRATION, A MARKED CHANGE FROM SHOPPING LIST APPROACH WHICH CHARACTERIZED PROGRAM DEVELOPED IN EARLY 1970S FOR 1972-1976 PERIOD. THE PLAN FOR 1977-1981 AS SUBMITTED IN JANUARY TO UNDP/NY (DUE TO BE DISCUSSED AT UNDP GOVERNING COUNCIL MEETING IN JUNE) DOVETAILS WITH OVERALL GOP PRIORITIES; WITH ONE EXCEPTION ALL PROJECTS ARE IN FOLLOWING AREAS: (1) PRE-FEASIBILITY AND FEASIBILITY ACTIVITIES IN ENERGY, ENVIR-

ONMENT, FISHERIES, FOREST RESOURCES AND AGRO-INDUSTRY;
(2) HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT; (3) PREPARATION OF
SECTORAL AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES; AND (4)
STRENGTHENING EXPORT PROMOTION ACTIVITIES. ABOUT 23 PERCENT
OF PROJECTED \$6.0 MILLION PROGRAM AVAILABILITIES FOR
1977-1981 IS AN UNPROGRAMMED RESERVE TO MEET ADD-ON RE-
QUIREMENTS IN THE FOUR AREAS. NEW PLAN REPRESENTS SHIFT TO
LARGER AND MORE COMPREHENSIVE ACTIVITIES WITHIN FRAMEWORK
OF AN OVERALL STRATEGY RATHER THAN A COLLECTION OF SMALL
AND UNCOORDINATED ACTIVITIES.

A SECOND ANNUAL COUNTRY PROGRAM REVIEW WAS HELD IN LATE
1975 AGAINST BACKDROP OF UNDP FINANCIAL CONSTRAINTS. MAJOR
RESULT WAS AGREEMENT WITH GOP AS TO PROGRAM CUTS DUE TO
UN FINANCIAL RESTRAINTS.

(E) PROJECT EVALUATION AND IMPLEMENTATION
TRIPARTITE PROJECT REVIEW FOR ALL LARGE SCALE PROJECTS HAS
BEEN USEFUL IN GETTING GOP TO ADDRESS PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION PRO-
BLEMS WITH AIM OF STRENGTHENING OR STREAMLINING PROJECTS.
REVIEWS HAVE NOT RESULTED IN DECISION TO TERMINATE MARGINAL
ACTIVITIES AS UN STRATEGY HAS BEEN TO WORK DISCREETLY TO
DISCOURAGE CONTINUATION OF SUCH ACTIVITIES BEYOND APPROVED
PROJECT LIFE. RECENT COUNTRY PROGRAM REVIEW (SEE SECTIONS C AND
D) ACCELERATED EFFORTS IN THIS REGARD.

(F) APPRAISAL OF PROPOSED PROJECTS
DCG MECHANISM ALLOWS USAID TO RESPOND TO SPECIFIC UNDP
PROPOSALS EARLIER IN PROJECT DEVELOPMENT CYCLE AND
PROVIDES MECHANISM FOR CONTINUING INPUT AND INTERCHANGE
AT BOTH AGENCY HEAD AND TECHNICAL LEVEL. THIS IS A MAJOR
IMPROVEMENT OVER MERELY REVIEWING PROJECT DOCUMENT JUST
PRIOR TO SUBMISSION TO UNDP/NY.

(G) WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT
UNDP FACES NO OBSTACLES OR CONSTRAINTS IN UTILIZING WOMEN AS
EXPERTS (THERE HAVE BEEN SEVERAL IN THE PAST) OR INTEGRATING
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THEM INTO DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES. OUR COMMENTS ON THE INTE-
GRATION OF WOMEN INTO DEVELOPMENT--PANAMA 1154 OF 14
FEBRUARY 1976--SHOULD CONSULTED; UNDP'S EXPERIENCE
PARALLELS OURS.
JORDEN

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